4. *Additional Data on* Otohu

Discouragement of initiation ritual by the Anglican mission and the consequent weakening of the institution greatly hampered me in obtaining the additional data needed to clarify Williams' account. Unable to attend any ceremonies, I had to depend almost entirely on interviews. Most adults still own *otohu*. The men usually receive them at initiation, the women either at initiation or, quite often, at the time of marriage. In about half the cases the father was the donor; in most other cases it was the mother's brother. One man who had been elected a member of the Higaturu Local Government Council, was honoured with an *otohu* by his wife's father.

With regard to initiation ritual, the seclusion of boys is no longer practised and the period of seclusion for girls tends to be much shorter than in earlier days. It is, however, rarely shorter than three weeks and sometimes still lasts for some months. The influence of the mission is given as the reason for the changes. When I asked why the modern custom for girls differs from that for boys, I was told that if girls were not secluded and subjected to the full ritual, they would be unable to control their menstrual flow; they would contaminate the village and sicken.

Kogumbari often occurs on the occasion of Christian festivals such as Easter, when the girls, fully dressed up, are 'shown to the people' during a dance on the mission ground. The white missionaries are unaware of the significance of the event. It appears that two ceremonies (puberty seclusion and initiation) to which adolescent girls used to be subjected have been reduced to one, which takes place upon the commencement of menstruation. *Otohu* are bestowed either then or upon marriage.

Boys receive their *otohu* at ceremonies which have become known as 'birthday parties', one of which is fully described by Crocombe (1966). The whole ceremony, including the conferral of *otohu*, usually occurs in a single weekend or at Christmas and a drinking party is sometimes given to the people by the father of the initiand. I never managed to attend one of these occasions but suspect that in many villages the ritual still involves the appearance of *embahi*. I have knowledge of one instance in a village close to Sivepe in 1967.

I was able to obtain additional data, relevant to the puzzle of the nature of the *otohu*, on two main topics: the role of the mother's brother and the role of the *aguma*. According to Orokaiva ideal norms, as stated to Williams (1930: 187) and myself, the mother's brother (*epe*) is the proper relative to perform initiation. This rule, like all others, is frequently broken, but it is worthy of mention that if there is no *epe* available to officiate, there is absolutely no preference for finding a uterine kinsman as a substitute: any other male consanguine is considered suitable, and in fact a father or father's brother often officiates. When Orokaiva informants were asked why mothers' brothers have this special relationship with their nephews, I was always told it is due to the love between the mother and her brother, in other words the *du* relationship. It is definitely not due to any special bond with the matrilineage or maternal patrilineage.

Bestowal of the *otohu* is only one of a series of ritual benefits customarily provided by the *epe*. These benefits take the form of medicines (*sivo*). A man

604 789 receives certain essential medicines from his father (e.g. for hunting, for planting taro) but other medicines are acquired during adolescence from the person who performs initiation, i.e. ideally the *epe*. These medicines include: *ba kovari sivo*, a medicine applied to taro leaves when the tubers have filled out and are ready for harvest; *kakara sivo*, a medicine for success in sex; and *saruka*, medicines for killing enemies. Though these presentations are entirely separate from the gift of an *otohu* they do indicate what spiritual capacities a man normally derives from his *epe*; the fact that these include the capacity to kill enemies helps us to understand more easily why killing is so strongly emphasised in the ritual of the bestowal of *otohu*.

881 301 604 Nobody has the *right* to receive an *otohu* nor does anyone have an obligation to confer it. It depends in theory on the *epe's* appraisal of the worth of the young initiand and especially on how the latter has behaved towards his/her *epe*. Has the initiand been co-operative, obedient, well-behaved? The questions are rather similar to those asked by Father Christmas. But, like Father Christmas, the *epe* has a prior commitment: to part with his treasure to *someone*: it is in the nature of the *otohu* to be passed on from generation to generation, and ideally it is passed on in the matriline.

881 301 577 When I asked informants about the significance of *otohu*, their replies were in general very close to what Williams had reported: people respect their *otohu* as the concrete embodiment of the moral virtues they regard as most important in life. When I asked for the reasons for this respect, one informant answered: 'I received this *otohu* from my mother's brother who was a good man. My sister has a son now. I want to give this *otohu* to that boy when he has grown big. [778] *That is what makes it otohu* (=holy).' We should note the emphasis the informant placed on the words 'I want to'. He invoked neither obligation nor 'custom' but rather a sense that his *otohu*, by virtue of its inner nature, was destined to be passed on to another initiate. My informant did not consider this a loss to himself, for he said: 'If I want another one, I can always make myself one.'

729 881 The second ritual actor about whom I obtained additional data was the *aguma*. The rite of tantalising the initiate before giving him his *otohu* continues; the term I was given for this rite among the Sangara was *otohu pasari*, the verb *pasari* being also used for catching fish. I was also told about the *aguma's* recital of his war deeds, but this information came from middle-aged men. When these men were initiated, there were still old warriors who could claim a respectable score of killings, but by now most of these old warriors must have died out among the Orokaiva. [266] Profound changes in male initiation ritual have coincided with the dying out of the genuine old cannibals: one might say that one reason why the institution of initiation has been transformed is the absence of persons with the traditional qualifications of the *aguma*. One difference between the modern 'birthday party' and traditional initiation is the greatly reduced emphasis on killing as a capacity bestowed on the initiand.

729 881 628 [754] *Aguma* were usually not from the same village as the initiands. They were generally invited from a village two or three miles distant. In Sivepe, villages such as Isoge and Kendata were quoted to me as suitable places from which to invite an *aguma*; for Hohorita initiations they might come from Bonge or Koipa. The total list of *aguma*-villages as given to me had a striking resemblance to another

5: Schwimmer E-4,5 (1966-1967) 1973
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23
Mountain Orokaiva

5. *The Message of the Sacred Flutes*

We are now in a position to analyse Williams' data on the *otohu*. Recent theoretical advances in anthropology help us to a fairly easy solution to the problem of the *otohu* by following up a clue Williams threw away as insignificant. Williams was actually very close to the solution I now propose. He recognised that the explanation of the *otohu* is to be found in the ritual of initiation. He also recognised that Chinnery's and Beaver's explanation of initiation, (viz. that it educates by showing initiands the terrifying power of the spirits), 'does not lay sufficient stress on the actual paraphernalia, viz. the bullroarers and flutes, which play a more important part in the ceremony than would appear' (1930: 195). Finally, Williams records (*ibid.*, 185) that in some localities such as Wasida, one of the duet of flutes is actually called *otohu* and the other *e* (= mother). Though this usage is only local, it nevertheless gives us a crucial insight into the significance of the word *otohu*.

Seeing that the Wasida people used the same word for the mental qualities known as *otohu* and the larger and lower-pitched of the pair of sacred flutes, it is useful to inquire whether some symbolic equivalence exists between these mental qualities and these objects. The question falls into two parts. First, we have to explain why there should be any association between a flute and a set of social virtues. Secondly, we have to explain why the flute called *otohu*, which is symbolically equivalent to a set of moral virtues, should be played in antiphony to another flute called *e*. As for the first question, Williams reports that these flutes are never seen but only heard by the uninitiated and that they are regarded as voices of the spirits or *embahi*. The initiated have seen the *embahi* and are allowed to see and play the sacred flutes. They have made the acquaintance of the world of primal ancestors who enunciated and established the moral rules of social behaviour. As children they were taught to obey these rules, but as initiates they have experienced a mystic unity with the deities who established them. The sacred flutes, being voices of the spirits, have communicated these rules in their spiritual essence. Now an *otohu embo* (a man of good character, ibid., p. 205) is a man who lives according to the message he has received from the sacred flutes. The connection between the flutes and the set of social virtues is therefore not difficult to establish.

Secondly, why should the flute called *otohu* be played in antiphony to a flute called *e*? To answer this question let us first recall that according to Williams' own evidence (*ibid.*, 185), the Orokaiva classify one of this pair of flutes – always the larger and lower-pitched one – as masculine and the other as feminine. If the latter is equated to 'mother', then what kinsman is associated with the masculine flute? It seems most plausible that the masculine flute should be symbolically equivalent to the mother's brother, as it is he who acts as initiator of the novice and is thus, on the social level, the mediator between the latter and the spirit world. He teaches the initiand to play the flutes, he gives him medicines which ensure success in adult roles, and finally he presents him with the ornament called *otohu*. The association here is clear enough, but see model 34 on p. 187.A

Throughout the Orokaiva world we find the opposition of the male and female principle: between killing and nurture, bush and garden, victim and taro

A [See Category 431--Analyst]

The mother and mother's brother, being the most harmonious, gentle and affectionate male/female couple known to the Orokaiva, are the most suited for the task of mediating between the fearsome spirit world and the human being. The two initiatory flutes are therefore identifed with them.

How are the *otohu* ornaments connected with (*a*) the moral qualities and (*b*) the flute of the same name? The first part of this question was answered convincingly by Williams, as we have seen. But how are *otohu* ornaments symbolically equivalent to flutes? It is relevant to recall the difference between the two identity symbols *otohu* and *hae*. Ideally, the latter is transmitted in the patriline, the former in the matriline. All other differences (e.g. that the *hae* is attached to the corporate group and the *otohu* to the exchange system) follow from the mode of transmission.

The common characteristic of initiation ceremony, sacred flutes and *otohu* ornaments is that they all ideally derive from uterine kin or, in any case, that they have no necessary connection with the clan. Initiation pries the novice loose from early over-attachment to the clan and confronts him with the more adventurous, less secure world of the exchange system (*mine*). This applies equally to girls and boys. The rigours of this new arena are very effectively dramatised by the *aguma* whose recital emphasises that it is meritorious for the *otohu embo* to kill enemies. The same message is conveyed in a different way by the mother's brother whose role includes the gift of black magic (*saruka*) to his nephew. The ornament, *saruka* and other presentations come to the nephew not of right, but in the form of *mine*, in exchange for help and obedience offered to the mother's brother and gifts made by the novice's family.

The existence of two identity symbols, *hae* and *otohu*, side by side, indicates the strong emphasis placed by Orokaiva culture upon social relationships outside the corporate group. Among the neighbouring Baruga, whose culture closely resembles the Orokaiva, but who are more strongly patrilineal, we find only one identity symbol, the *kotopo*, which serves both as *hae* (lineage emblem) and as *otohu* (honorific ornament). Initiation is here carried out by the clan, introduces the novice to full clan membership, but carries no implications for participation in a wider network.

The *otohu* flute is a voice from the spirit world, mediated through the mother's brother. This voice communicates a certain moral order. The initiand hears the flutes but at that time makes no response. If he is later presented with an *otohu* ornament, he must make pledges. The ornament, as it is thrown back and forth over his head, communicates the same message as the flute but this time the novice responds to the voice. It is thus that he makes the ornament into a symbol of his identity.

6. Otohu *and* Hambo *Compared*

There are many resemblances between *otohu* and other *hambo*. They are made from largely the same materials. They are all, together with *di* (feathers) made accessible to men and women at the time of initiation, as soon as they have seen the *embahi*. Yet there are also many differences both in significance and in transactional custom. First of all, *otohu* may be worn on any important occasion, but *hambo* only during a dance or in other ceremonial contexts.

only permissive rights at Inonda or any nearby place. He has been living at Inonda for some years on a temporary basis and is dependent for gardening land on his relatives by marriage at Inonda. He has also been loaned two pieces of gardening land at Hohota, where he used to conduct a church school, and is obliged to accept whatever land is made available to him. One of his gardens in Hohota is planted on land held by his mother's sister's husband's brother's son, and the other on the land of a senior deacon of the Hohota church.

Two other gardens with recognizable boundaries have been made amongst the main block of gardens. One was made in 1960 by an Inonda man who has since died, and the other by a man of the Jegotumo lineage (of the Andiriha clan) who was born in Inonda but now lives in Hohota village. The sub-lineage to which he belongs has rights to at least two areas of Inonda land. It was presumably to affirm his rights that he made a garden on one of these lands, for he does most of his gardening in Hohota, where his lineage has ample land. Inonda folk say that his rights in the Inonda land will 'live' while he or his son work the land and 'visit' the village (i.e. take part in appropriate village activities such as church celebrations, taro festivals, weddings and funerals). If he did not work the land, they say, then his sons (who are still small children) would not be entitled to make use of it.

Informants claimed that a man in need has the right to make gardens on the land of the mother's brother though this is exercised only if it is within walking distance of the planter's village. The only instance noted was that of a man who began preparing a new garden on his mother's brother's land at Urio just after our survey was completed.

Hunting and foraging rights: Any primary member of the Andiriha and Jego'undi sub-clans in Inonda can hunt or forage on any portion of the Inonda land which is covered with virgin bush, kunai grass, or second growth. Likewise any villager may take such timber or firewood as he needs from the virgin bush, and although it is said that one may also take these

25: Schwimmer E-5 (1966-1970) 1974 OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

571 But for most everyday purposes, the cooperative alliance is even smaller and does not extend beyond the three-generation family.

571 Relations with uterines, affines, and more distant agnates (that is, those beyond the lineage, and those who are resident in other villages) follow the ● 604 pattern of competitive exchange. An example of what this implies would be 881 the role of mother's brother as officiator at initiations. Elsewhere, (Schwimmer, 1970b) I show that ideologically, he is the proper person for the office, but that the father's brother and even the father would do as well. The mother's brother is not obliged to act; he is paid if he acts; furthermore he will act only if prior to an initiation, the neophyte involved has obliged his uncle by rendering him small services and being pleasant to him. Certainly the mo/bro si/so relationship is a warm affectionate one, but it is explicitly free from unconditional obligation. It is, in fact, the first formal relationship into which a person enters, where prestations on both sides are by free choice.

602 How can we explain that, at least in Sasembata, the Orokaiva classify 572 guest friends with the sibling group (by applying the terms *apa/eambo* to 171 them), whereas the Tangu use an affinal idiom? The answer is that siblingship has different connotations in the two tribes. Burridge (1969) emphasizes, above all, the amity that must govern the relationship between senior and junior siblings among the Tangu. If the junior sibling becomes unduly competitive, it is not held against him, but the relationship is redefined so that he becomes a *mwerkindang* – a competitor instead of a subordinate and protégé. The Orokaiva do not permit such a change in status; the younger brother must obey or sever his relations with his family. Moreover, the *apa/eambo* relationship is not confined to the cooperative alliance but includes distant agnates and all uterines within the exogamous group. A good deal of competition and exchange normally occurs between such kin, although the ideology of the *apa/eambo* relationship is basically that of a corporate group pooling resources for the support and protection of its members.

431 Secondly, the custom of classifying guest friends with siblings is not 437 general among Orokaiva; the Sangara use the term *namei*. Furthermore, 572 terminology is as much an ideological device as a reflection of reality. Use of *apa/eambo* means that people should behave *as if* they were siblings; that is, make free gifts instead of exchange gifts. These terms may be used when one seeks to extract a presentation from a comparative stranger, in which case they mean little more than an appeal *ad misericordiam*. In an hereditary friendship in which it is unusual to make claims, the terms signify that the gifts made to a visiting friend are not repayable but free. Certainly, it would [576] be considered wrong to press claims on the basis of such gifts. On the other [626] hand, the host is expected (*not* merely permitted) to make a return visit, and if he does not present gifts on that occasion, he will certainly be the subject [558] of gossip and loss of reputation.

In considering the manner in which these gifts are given, Sahlins'